

## **I-195 REDEVELOPMENT DISTRICT COMMISSION**

### **MEETING OF DESIGN REVIEW SUBCOMMITTEE**

**JANUARY 12, 2015**

The Design Review Subcommittee (the “Subcommittee”) of the I-195 Redevelopment District met on Monday, January 12, 2015 beginning at 11 AM, at the offices of the Rhode Island Commerce Corporation, located at 315 Iron Horse Way, Suite 101, Providence, Rhode Island.

The following Subcommittee members were present and participated throughout the meeting: Dr. Barrett Bready, Ms. Diana Johnson, and Chairman Colin Kane.

Also present were Ms. Jan Brodie, District Executive Director, and Project Associate, Kate Holguin. In addition, Shawn Martin of Fuss & O’Neill, Bonnie Nickerson, Director, and Chris Ise of the Providence Department of Planning, Roberta Randall and Ted Sanderson of the Rhode Island Historic Preservation and Heritage Commission were also present.

The meeting was called to order at 11 AM.

1. John Cappellano from Phoenix Lincoln, Jonathan Hodge and Michael Breau from The Architectural Team, and Blair Hines from Blair Hines Design Associates presented on design of the proposal of Lincoln Phoenix Providence Ventures to purchase and develop District Parcel 28 into suite style apartments. They announced that they had put under agreement the purchase of the corner parcel that currently houses a two-story structure tenanted by nightclubs, and some surface parking. The plan presented to the Subcommittee included the entire block bordered by Chestnut, Clifford, Richmond, and Friendship. They shared a site plan that featured a public courtyard at the corner of Richmond and Clifford and a more private courtyard internal to the site, between Friendship and Clifford. The corner lot will be used for a market rate residential, five-story building, geared to graduate students, with ground level commercial space facing Richmond. The balance of the block holds a single building, for use as suite-style residences targeting undergraduate students. The massing of this building is broken down to read as two buildings, also with ground level commercial space. Commissioners asked questions of the development team, and Commissioner Johnson specifically requested more information and examples of the choices of materials.
2. It was noted by Mr. Martin, Mr. Ise, and Ms. Nickerson that the building design needed to identify how it complied to zoning regulations and to specify if and why any waivers might be needed. Under the current zoning regulations adopted by the Commission, a private institutional housing project is not allowed. Also under these regulations, the absence of off-street loading is not allowed, and the building on Chestnut Street is too far offset from the street. There was concern about this building frontage not pulled to the street along Richmond Street. There were also concerns regarding the articulation and activation of each A street, Richmond, Chestnut, and Clifford. It was suggested that a clear list of waivers relative to both the 2012 and 2014 Providence Zoning Ordinances

be created by Mr. Martin in conjunction with Mr. Ise, and then ask the developer to respond.

3. A public comment period was held. Mr. Steve Durkee of Cornish Associates suggested the design would benefit from being simplified with fewer materials and a muted color pallet and expressed concern about the success of the building base as a retail front. Mr. Doug Brown, Mr. Michael Viveiros, and Ms. Martha Werenfels from Durkee Brown Viveiros Werenfels also suggested more simplicity in colors and façade features and a concern about the quality of materials. They also shared concern about the activation and articulation of critical corners that border each corner of the site. These points were also expressed by residents of the Jewelry District as to materials, colors, ground level design and looked for a way to respect the historic buildings on Clifford and Chestnut Streets that are neighbors to the property. City Walk was mentioned, and it was acknowledged that it had been incorporated into the design thinking and a possible expansion of the trail through the site was introduced.
4. Ms. Randall and Mr. Sanderson suggested that a more detailed review be written up about how the proposal conforms to zoning. They also suggested that the main entrance of the development be more clearly demarcated. They repeated the comments from others for a more restrained, muted color pallet, further study of materials and to improve the design of the retail fronts. They also requested that the next presentation of the proposal include more detailed elevation drawings of the frontages facing Chestnut Street and Friendship Street, roof plans and elevations that show any rooftop structures or equipment, and samples that show the proposed exterior materials and colors.
5. Next Steps: It was suggested that a specific zoning analysis from Fuss & O'Neill with Mr. Ise's assistance, Mr. Sanderson's comments on the design of the District Parcel 28 development and the Subcommittee meeting notes be shared with the developer's team to inform them for a second Design Review meeting.

There being no further business, upon motion duly made and seconded, the meeting was adjourned at 12:50 pm.

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I-195 Design Subcommittee Member